

Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing

Papers Presented at the Sixty-Second Annual Convention

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

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Fellow Members:

This section was founded to give the pharmacist a clearing house, for the exchange of practical hints and information about dispensing, and the practice of real pharmacy, as well as to provide an institution to aid and foster initiative and advancement. The record of our proceedings should form an accurate history of the progress of practical pharmacy and dispensing within these United States, and the papers presented at these meetings should throw a vivid light on the practical application of scientific pharmaceutical advancement of the year, reflecting a credit to American pharmacy second to none.

Excellent work has been done by this section since its very beginning, work of a quality that has served as an inspiration to your officers, and work that we hope to equal this year. The scope and usefulness of this section, however, is such that, up to the present, I believe we have but barely scratched the surface of our possibilities. Officers have labored under great handicaps, and the general support of the membership is still to be enlisted. Gradually these handicaps should be eliminated, and each year should add to the number of actively interested members, until by growth and development, the section will reach the zenith of service and usefulness to American pharmacy.

I did not fully realize the inadequateness of my experience, when you honored me with this important office, or I should have been more reluctant about assuming it and the duties involved. I am mentioning this with a definite purpose, for I believe that all previous officers have felt, to a greater or less extent, the lack of experience in conducting work of this nature. I also believe that something can be done to help overcome, in part at least, this handicap, and it is for this reason that I am devoting a portion of my address to the work of the section direct, embodying a few questions that I hope may receive your earnest consideration.

Guided by the experience obtained in a year's effort on behalf of our section, I am led to believe that one of the greatest handicaps to the officers lies in the absence of all records pertaining to the work done by their predecessors. Each year we have succeeded in collecting a number of valuable and instructive papers, most of them written by what we might call the old guard; small indeed is the quantity of new blood enlisted. Either there exists a shameful apathy on part of the rank and file of our members, or we officers are on the wrong track in our efforts to enlist their interest and coöperation. Would the preservation of our correspondence, mailing lists, etc., help future officers in selecting the names of members to whom to address their appeal for papers? Would a record of how and what, was done, with a notation of the results obtained, serve as a useful comparison or prove of value in determining how the duties of the officers may be executed with the greatest efficiency and economy? Could we in course of a few years by following a definite system, make an effective appeal to the entire membership and enlist the coöperation of all who are interested in practical pharmacy and dispensing? Could the final results of such appeals be tabulated or reduced to a card-index system, that would eliminate guesswork and un-

necessary expense and labor? Would it be advisable to formulate at each convention a set of questions, embodying such problems as confront practical pharmacy and dispensing, for study and solution during the year, the results or answers to be offered at the following year's meetings? Could a systematic research of practical pharmacy be carried on by this section, if we should formulate definite plans, divide and assign the work to such members as have expressed their willingness to aid, and compile the results for publication or presentation at our conventions? Would a carefully planned progressive campaign, endeavoring to solve the problems and questions confronting us, spell greater progress and interest for the section than our present method of leaving all the subjects of our papers and discussions entirely to chance? I believe I should answer these questions in the affirmative; further I believe the section can accomplish these and greater things in course of time if we shall lay the proper foundations and plan our work ahead like an architect plans a building previous to its construction.

I would like to have you discuss these questions briefly, and I should especially like to hear the opinions of the ex-chairmen and past officers of the section. Even tho it may be considered premature to take definite action this year, I feel that such a discussion will bring out many valuable suggestions, which, as part of our minutes can be referred to by future officers, with profit as well as give additional material for study previous to final action.

The interests of this section are the interests of the practical pharmacist and dispenser, and as such is true, I feel it may not be amiss to touch on some of the influences shaping his destiny.

Pharmacy is undergoing decided evolutionary processes. Considerable attention has been paid to the trend of commercialism, but the influences that are now changing the professional side of our vocation have been but meagerly discussed. Hygiene, preventive medicine, serum therapy, vaccine treatment and other modern methods are reducing the present physicians' legitimate demand for drugs. Prescription business is not increasing. Dispensing doctors, the "hand me down" type of prescriptions supplied by manufacturing houses in the form of ethical (?) proprietaries, Christian Science, medical fads, the public's love for self-treatment with patent nostrums, and our own inclination to let the manufacturer do the bulk of our work along producing lines, leave little real professional work for the pharmacist. We must carefully conserve the remnant and find new fields of professional endeavor, or professional pharmacy will gradually pass out of existence. By proper attention to the actual practice of pharmacy, much can be done to revive and maintain a demand for such professional service as is involved in the dispensing of prescriptions. Making our own preparations, educating the doctor to specify U. S. P. and N. F. and seeing that, when these standard preparations are specified, the products dispensed or compounded are perfect, active and pure, will do much toward increasing profits and regaining or holding professional prestige. But this alone will not suffice, for that line of service is becoming more limited. We must study the new tendencies and determine where new fields of usefulness are open to us. The pharmacy is the logical source of aid, information and supply for both physician and patient, and it behooves us to keep abreast with modern demands. If a physician abandons the old-fashioned prescription and oral administration, for the more modern intravenous method, should we worry? No! We should prepare ourselves to meet his wants, make and supply the necessary sterile solutions in glass-stoppered bottles or ampoules. We can do it just as well as some Frenchman on the other side of the globe.

If a physician is strong for vaccine treatments, we should supply him not only with vaccines, but offer our service on everything that goes with it. If he insists on making his own bacteriological examinations, we can at least supply him

with the stains, reagents, etc. required for this work. Let us be ever on the alert to exploit every opportunity that offers a chance for professional service, and let us take care that we are equipped to render such service in a satisfactory manner.

Evolution of pharmacy will not mean its death or a loss to those engaged in its practice, so long as we will grasp the opportunities offered by evolution, remain on top of the wave of progress, and rectify those conditions or practices that tend to lower, undermine or destroy our professional existence. While we should not advertise the defects or shortcomings to be found in our profession, we must nevertheless meet the problem squarely and seriously.

There are so-called pharmacists practicing to-day, who are unable to meet even limited demands along the ordinary line of professional pharmaceutical service, to say nothing of keeping abreast with advancement.

There exist so-called pharmacies to-day and many, many of them, whose prescription-stock is out of all proportion with the income derived from this department, and even then it is too limited and too old, to make good service possible on the few prescriptions that are filled.

Many localities are still burdened with so-called pharmacies that serve only as a blind for the degrading traffic in liquor and narcotics, practices that should be entirely divorced from, and never allowed to soil the skirts of an honorable profession.

It is to our shame that such things are true, and it is such conditions that rob pharmacy of its professional standing with the public and other professions. They are the destructive elements whose insidious activities are so effective, that the combined efforts of those who strive to advance our profession fade into insignificance. That the real pharmacist suffers more from these conditions than the druggist with whom pharmacy is a side line, is obvious.

Proper laws and their enforcement are helpful means to eradicate or mitigate these evils, but the most effective weapon in our hands lies in the selection and training of our apprentices. They will be the pharmacists of tomorrow. Their ability, thought and ideals will shape its destiny. They will act, think, believe in, hold sacred and idealize as we teach them, and therein lies our responsibility to pharmacy. Its future, through them, is in our hands.

So, if we would serve ourselves, humanity and our profession, let us not only practice pharmacy but ensure its future by eradicating present evils and barring from its ranks the morally and mentally unfit or incapable.



SCENE IN BELLE ISLE PARK, DETROIT.